GUIDE TO THE SK7 GUANÁ FILE

[The Guaná, who call themselves Chaná, were the southernmost representatives of the widespread Arawakan linguistic family in South America. According to the written account of Sánchez Labrador in 1767, the Guaná tribes (Echoaladi, Kinikinao, Layana, Niguecactemic, and Terena), were located along the Paraguay River extending from latitude 21° S. to latitude 19° S. They were probably in this area when first discovered by the Spaniards. The Terena, a sub-group of the Guaná and the file sample used here, now occupy the southern region of Mato Grosso which extends between the 20° and 22° parallels and the 54° and 58° meridians. In Paraguay, the name Guaná was substituted for Chaná, the latter term being restricted to the Layana sub-group. To distinguish the two Chaná branches whose history and culture developed along different lines, the name Chané by conventional usage has been applied to the western groups along the Andes and Guaná to the eastern sub-groups of the Paraguay basin.

Before the arrival of the Spaniards to the Chaco, the peaceful Guaná farmers had been conquered by and were vassals of the roving Mbayá. The Guaná provided the Mbayá agricultural produce, manufactured goods, and menial labor in return for protection against incursions from other war-like groups. This symbiotic relationship lasted until the nineteenth century when both ethnic groups began to disintegrate under White influence. While originally the cultures of Guaná and Mbayá were markedly different from one another, they soon blended together and became identical. During the last half of the 18th century (probably around 1787) the Guaná migrated to the eastern side

of the Paraguay River, while the Mbayá seem to have abandoned the Chaco. In 1767 the various subgroups making up the Guaná people were settled in seven large villages. Detailed information on these settlements and the subsequent demographic changes in locations and population size after a period of thirty years will be found in Métraux's article on the "Ethnography of the Chaco", Handbook of South American Indians, Vol. 1, pp. 239-240.

At the end of the 18th century Aguirre and Azara gave the total Guaná population as 8,200. In 1845 the population of Terená as reported by Castelnau was 3,000, basically the same as found for this group in the mid-20th century.

Subsistence was based primarily on agriculture by the brand-tillage method and supplemented by hunting, fishing, and the gathering of wild fruits and roots. The chief crops grown were maize, sweet and bitter manioc, cara, beans, sweet potatoes, squash, gourds, sugarcane, cotton, and tobacco. The dog was the only native domesticated animal among the Guaná, but the horse was readily adopted and produced a shift to a semi-migratory life. Among the Terena, parrots, macaws, and rheas were also kept for their feathers. Cattle were obtained in raids by the Terena, as well as horses, but apparently they were not milked but instead used as a source of meat and even ridden.

Men performed the heavy work of clearing the land and hoeing the ground while women and older children assisted in planting, weeding, and harvesting. Food preparation, spinning and weaving, and pottery making were the activities of women. Men's work consisted of hunting, fishing, tool making, preparation of skins, basket making,

and warfare. Wild plant foods were gathered by both sexes.

The Guaná village consisted of a number of beehive-shaped huts (more rectangular among the Terena) covered with reed mats and arranged in a circle around a central plaza. Each of the huts housed a bilocal extended family. Residence was initially matrilocal but ultimately it became either matrilocal or patrilocal depending on the relative wealth and status of the family involved.

Marriage was generally monogamous but there was no objection to polygamy. In the past an individual was prohibited from marrying parallel or cross cousins or anyone whom he called "brother" or "sister", and was expected to marry within his moiety or class. Among affinal relations the sororate and levirate were the preferred marriage forms. No bride-price was required.

Descent among the Guaná was bilateral. The villages were divided into two endogamous moieties which generally functioned as ceremonial units but exercised some degree of control over their members by regulating marriages and acting in council to settle matters concerning group decisions. Each of these moieties had a separate chief although the villages themselves were politically autonomous and had a single war chief. Succession to office was patrilineal. Kinship terminology was of the Hawaiian type.

Class distinctions were well developed in Guaná society with three separate strata being present: (1) chiefs ("big" and "small"), (2) people (commoners), and (3) captives. The Terena recognized four such classes: (1) chiefs (unati), (2) warriors (shuna'asheti), (3) commoners (wahereshane) and (4) slaves (kauti). The slaves were obtained in raids on neighboring groups.

The aboriginal Terena believed in a high god (Itukoviche), in the culture hero twins (Yúrikoyuvaki) and in such evil spirits as Vanonu, Voropí and Hihíaiuné. All objects were believed to have a soul and thus to possess certain powers that could be called forth by magic for good or evil purposes. Shamanism was highly developed and the spirits of dead shamans were used by their living counterparts to influence the affairs of men. Today most of the Terena are either Catholics or Protestants, although they still attend shamanistic performances.

This file consists of six sources all dealing with the Terena sub-group of the Guaná; two in English (2: Oberg and 6: Oliveira), two being translations from the German (4: Baldus and 5: Rohde), one from the Portuguese (3: Oliveira) and one from the Spanish (7: Bach). Source number one in this file has not as yet been processed. There is no single source in the file that is completely adequate for a general background on the Terena, but instead a combination of sources 2: Oberg, 4: Baldus, 5: Rohde, and 7: Bach would give enough ethnographic data to serve as orientation material for the researcher. All sources in the file, except 7: Bach which was written by a businessman, were written by professional anthropologists and contain excellent primary data based on actual fieldwork with the Terena.

Source 2: Oberg is a study of culture change in Terena society resulting from contact and interaction with the Caduveo, an Mbayá group (SK11) and Brazilian culture in general. This theme of culture change is continued in 3: Oliveira, which attempts to record and interpret the processes of social interaction between Terena and Brazilian society with the goal of determining the operative socio-cultural mechanism affecting the more specific process of assimilation. 4: Baldus is a study of the succession to chieftainship within a Terena group living near Miranda in the southern part of the Brazilian Mato Grosso. This source also contains some incidental information on Terena ethnography. 5: Rohde is a collection of scattered ethnographic data, mostly on material culture, relevant to a Terena group living to the west of Miranda toward the Bolivian border. 6: Oliveira is a structural analysis of the Terena marriage and social stratification system. 7: Bach is again a collection of notes on the ethnography of the Terena living near Miranda, gathered during the author's travels through the area in the 1890's. The researcher should note that the data contained in this file are primarily restricted to the Terena subgroup of the Guana and do not necessarily relate to the entire Guaná group. The file, however, does have good historical coverage (1884-1958), but is somewhat weak on kinship and social and poltical organization. The file was processed in 1965-1968.]